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RETAIL INFLATION DOWN TO 4.06% IN JANUARY

The dip from 4.59% in Dec 2020 is attributed to declining veggie prices in the National Statistical Office data released on Friday

AT 1.89%, FOOD BASKET PRICE RISE DOWN, TOO

Meat, fish, eggs and milk experienced an uptick in price, but it was more than adequately offset by the decrease in the rates of vegetables and confectionaries. The overall rate of price rise in the food basket was 1.89% in January, down from 3.41% in December 2020. Retail inflation has cooled down significantly, owing largely to moderation in food inflation

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION UP 1% IN DEC

Indicating continuing recovery, industrial production entered positive territory after a month. The manufacturing sector posted a growth of 1.6% but mining output declined by 4.8%
Power generation grew by a healthy 5.1%, taking the overall growth of eight core sectors of the economy to 1%

4.9%

GROWTH IN CONSUMER DURABLES
COMPARED TO -1.6% IN DECEMBER 2020

Disengagement at Pangong to take more time

Army uses multiple modes to check pullback

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

FULL bilateral military disengagement in the Pangong lake area in Eastern Ladakh along the Line of Actual Control could take more time than thought, as the wary Indian Army is using multiple modes to verify China's reciprocal withdrawal of troops and equipment.

"We are not taking any chances this time. Additional verification mechanisms have been introduced. Apart from satellite and drone images, videography of the disengagement is also being done," a senior Army officer said.

The distrust stems from the problems the Chinese side had created both at Galwan and Hot Spring-Gogra in June last. Indian soldiers on their mission found partial disengagement in both sites, which snowballed into the Galwan violence.

"We have differences in perception about the position of the LAC on the north bank of the Pangong lake. But on the ground, there is no confusion

about it in the south bank."

Chinese troops coming to Finger 4 were present inside India's claim line, but in the south bank, both sides are sitting in areas of their claim lines. As per the agreements, Chinese troops will relocate to the east of Finger 8 and the Indian Army will be based at Dhan Singh Thapa post close to Finger 4 on the north bank of the lake.

Withdrawal of armoured vehicles has been completed from around five spots. "The tanks were as close as 50 metres apart at some points. Now they have moved back to their administrative bases into the rear," another Army officer said.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said that the agreement to disengage at Pangong was reached after several rounds of talks. "The two sides have also agreed to convene 10th round of senior commanders meeting within 48 hours after complete disengagement in the Pangong lake area, to address the remaining issues," he said.

ISRO top brass pushed Sivan Jr's recruitment: Plaint

MIRAD MUDUR & BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

THE Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has registered a complaint against Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman and Secretary, Department of Space (DoS), Dr K Sivan, over allegations of irregularities in recruiting his son in ISRO's Liquid

Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) in Vallamala, Thiruvananthapuram, by bypassing norms.

The complaint -- "171623/2021/vigilance-6", dated January 25, 2021 -- names LPSC Director Dr V Narayanan, and alleges that the recruitment of Dr Sivan's son Sidharth S was not

just a matter of conflict of interest, but a case of "favouritism and conspiracy to benefit the Secretary DoS and Chairman ISRO (Sivan) and his son". Dr Narayanan, the complaint stated, was in a hurry to fill the post as Dr

Sivan was then supposed to retire on January 14 (his tenure has been extended) and Dr Narayanan was anticipating to be transferred to Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Sidharth's allegedly hurried recruitment was to favour ISRO chief before the anticipated transfer of Dr Narayanan, a rocket

propulsion expert who joined ISRO in 1984 and has been LPSC director since January 2018. The complaint states that to hurry up the recruitment, Sidharth's placement was not taken up in the general recruitment through ISRO's Central Recruitment Board, which conducts screening, written test and interview. Instead, only interview was held. P7

EXPRESS EXPOSE



Kharge is Leader of Opposition in RS

RICHA SHARMA @ New Delhi

BYPASSING Congress deputy leader in the Rajya Sabha Anand Sharma, Gandhi loyalist and veteran party leader Mallikarjun Kharge is set to replace Ghulam Nabi Azad as the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Rajya Sabha.

A Dalit leader, Kharge, who is a nine-time MLA and two-time Lok Sabha member from Karnataka, was leader of the party during the last Lok Sabha. After he lost the last election in 2019, he was nominated to the Rajya Sabha last year with an aim to replace Azad, who is retiring on February 15. The party has informed the Rajya Sabha Secretariat about Kharge's appointment as Leader of Opposition.

Congress chief Sonia Gandhi picked Kharge over Azad, who did not get another term in Rajya Sabha, and Sharma, who was hopeful of the elevation in the Upper House, after they wrote to her seeking organisational elections and leadership issues. P4



The new lake formed upstream of the Rishiganga that is adding to the rescuers' worry | SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Lake formed by rubble on Rishiganga river a concern

“The rubble holding the water is huge. If loose material holding it is pushed away by water, it will be a big threat

D P Dobhal, Geologist

VINEET UPADHYAY @ Tapovan (Uttarakhand)

AMID ongoing rescue efforts at the Tapovan tunnel, the detection of a new lake formed by boulders that rolled on to the Rishiganga and blocked it about 8 km upstream from Raini village, added to the worry as it could cause more havoc than Sunday flash floods if it were to burst.

However, scientists said water from the lake started draining on Friday, reducing the chances of a calamity.

Y P Sundariyal, head of the department of geology at the Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University, said, "The lake is around 250-300 metres

long, 80-100 metres wide and of about 25-30 metres deep. As the volume of water is huge, hypothetically if it bursts, it could cause more damage than earlier. But since the water is slowly draining, it will not burst. Authorities should drain it without trying to burst it, using skilled manpower."

A similar but bigger lake was formed in 1998 in the Madakini river in Madmeshwar valley, which safely drained. "There was panic, but the lake drained and the danger was averted. We hope it will happen at this lake too," he added.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat said, "We need not panic but must stay alert." P6

Resignation drama on RS floor by TMC MP Trivedi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

TRINAMOLU Congress MP Dinesh Trivedi on Friday created a flutter by announcing his decision to prematurely end his Rajya Sabha membership on the floor of the House. He attributed rampant violence in West Bengal and suffocation in the party that is 'no longer under Mamata Ban-



erjee's control' as reasons for his decision to resign.

Soon after getting up to speak during the debate on the Budget, Trivedi said: "There are limitations here. My party has sent me here, so I am grateful. But now I can't take what is happening

any more. I am feeling suffocated. That's why I want to resign from here. I want to work for my Bengal," the former railway minister said.

The BJP was quick to welcome him, if he wanted to make the switch. Criticising the violence, Trivedi said: "I am from the land of Subhas Chandra Bose. My soul is saying I sit here and say nothing, what is the point?"

Bengaluru only Indian city in FDI global list

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

BENGALURU, which adorns many titles, added one more feather to its cap on Friday. It was placed 13 in the top 30 global cities of the future ranking, in the global economy and foreign direct investment (FDI), which was released by Knight & Frank.

While hailing the recognition, industry captains pointed out to the government that a lot more needs to be done to sustain and improve the city.

Singapore topped the list for the fourth consecutive time, followed by London and Dubai. Bengaluru is the only city in the country to make it to the list.

Soon after the report was released, ministers B Sriramulu and Jagadish Shettar took to Twitter to celebrate the achievement. IT-BT Principal Secretary Gaurav Gupta said that the list is an important parameter that shows how the investment fraternity looks at the city, and reveals the city's high recall value. The challenge, however, is to ensure that it is sustained and improved, he added.

T V Mohandas Pai, chairman, Manipal Global Education Services, said, "Bengaluru has the highest number of people in technology -- around 20 lakh people. It has 25,000 IT companies and gets \$5-6 billion FDI every year." P7

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